



The HHSA Connection

APRIL 2004

SAFE, HEALTHY AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

One Goal for all: Good Health Celebrate National Public Health Week

National Public Health Week (April 5-11) is an opportunity to bring attention to health conditions throughout our community, and to the resources and accomplishments that contribute to improved health for everyone.

This year the National Public Health focus is on health disparities. During the past two years, much attention has been given to this issue. It began in March 2002, with the release of the Institute of Medicine Report documenting health disparities. Recently, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Report featured the follow-up status of Healthy People 2010 objectives related to health disparities.

Certainly, improving the health of those populations where gaps are

identified will contribute to and improve the overall health of the County and entire nation. In celebration of Public Health Week the following activities have been planned:

Public Health Week Activities

Monday, April 5

Public Health displays open in lobby of the Health Services Complex, 3851 Rosecrans Street, San Diego

Friday, April 9 - Public Health Champion Awards

2:00 - 3:30 P.M., CAC, Room 310

1700 Pacific Highway, San Diego

Other Public Health Week Activities

- Look for weekly emails in April containing valuable health tips about cancer, heart disease and stroke, etc.
- ["Calendar of Activities" posted on the HHSA website](#)



National Public Health Week, April 5-11, 2004

CLASSY CLASSIFICATIONS: HUMAN SERVICES SPECIALIST

New to the Country?

Hassan is Here to Help

When Somali's and others come to receive services in the CalWORKS program Ahmed Hassan is there to help.

Hassan, a native of Somalia who has been in the United States for about eight years, is a Human Services specialist with CalWORKS in North Central Region. He helps clients of all walks of life determine their eligibility, get food stamps and other services, and keeps a close eye out for fraud. For Somalis new to the system, Hassan is essential.

"I am the only Somali speaker in this district, and I often get requests from other departments to do translation," he said. He enjoys the multicultural environment in his office: "We have people from all sorts of different cultures here, and when I first came here, it was the first time I was exposed to so many cultures."

Hassan also likes being able to help others. "I enjoy contact with the public and take customer service seriously," he said. On the side, Hassan co-owns a Somali and Ethiopian restaurant with a County social worker.



Ahmed Hassan speaks CalWORKS, and more.

A Message from

Jean Shepard,

Agency Acting Director

There have been many rumors about the upcoming operational plan and possible lay-offs in the Agency. I realize these are stressful times, and that this period of uncertainty is difficult. We are in the process of finalizing the op plan, and hope to be able to provide you with more specific information by the end of April.

Please be assured that I will share this information with you as soon as I possibly can. We will also do everything we can to assist those of you who might be impacted by the proposed reductions.

I encourage you to ask your supervisor if you have questions about any rumors that you have heard. By tackling these issues head on, we can hopefully reduce unnecessary stress and worry.

My heartfelt appreciation to all of you as you go above and beyond in serving our children, families and seniors each and every day. Thank you for your continued dedication and understanding.



Jean Shepard

Central/North Central Region

Five Times the Benefit

San Diego's Families are Looking for a few Good Grown-Ups

Your today can be their tomorrow... in Central and North Central Regions, the First 5 Commission of San Diego County and Aging & Independence Services are looking for a few experienced hands to help pre-schoolers learn to read, help new parents raise their families, assist kids who are disabled or have special needs, and help those traumatized by domestic violence or homelessness. What better way to add meaning to your life? Perhaps you, your parent, relative, friend, neighbor, organization



you belong to see this as your way to give back by providing children who are 0-5 with the best possible start in life. Volunteer mentors must be at least 55; there is a stipend to help defray travel or other expenses. Pass the word along.

"When over 55 meets under 5 there are 'high-fives' all around!"

Wellness Health Fair a Success

Mind Over Matter? Complete Health Takes Both

The Southeast Family Resource Center formed a Wellness Committee that benefits employees both physically and mentally. The Committee provides and promotes tips to improve the physical and mental health of staff.



Social Worker **Peggy Higgins** organized a group of volunteers for the committee, and came up with ideas such as: organized walks; competitions between offices for weight loss and fewer sick days; and a health fair featuring speakers on various physical and mental well-being topics.

A successful health fair was held, with participants including: *Integrated Services*, *American Lung Association*, *Soup 'n Salad Unlimited*, *Jenny Craig*, and *PacifiCare*, just to name a few. More than 100 people took part, and all commented how wonderful the event was.

The Wellness Committee continues to meet and organize walks, and plans to bring in monthly speakers and have quarterly health fairs.

HHSA Events Calendar - click to check out goings-on, or, advise your web contact to post events.

Tid Bytes - Information Technology Division

*Did you know...*The Information Technology Division (ITD) has a Website on the HHSA Intranet.

[Visit the Website](#) and learn more about what ITD does and how they can serve you.

Did You Know...?

When dialing another County employee outside of your area code, dial 7 first and then the 7 digits, rather than 9+1+619, 858 or 760 first. You'll save the County money, and yourself a bit of time! For more tips on getting the most from your phone, [click here](#).

Aging & Independence Services

Things that Start with the Letter Q

New Database Software Moves at Lightning Speed

It's called the "Q," and our Contracts Unit hopes that Q stands for *Quicker* when it comes to helping them prepare reports for funding sources. The previous system for reporting data to the California Department on Aging (CDA) involved Excel spreadsheets that CDA said they couldn't read. But now, for example, all the nutrition contractors will have access to the database and can input their regular client information, plus attendance. The database can easily tabulate information from the many sites in just a few keystrokes, *voila*, instant report!

Now when Deputy Director **Pam Smith** wants to know how many meals are delivered to Latino clients, the Contracts staff members don't have to make out a service request to Pennant Alliance for the information. They will be able to call up the answer instantly via Q. This system even provides a more accurate accounting of such demographics as ethnic origin than was previously available.

The Q system also avoids duplication of services to one client because the database alerts the user to a previously entered name. The Q is one of a handful of social service software products being evaluated and used by counties throughout California. The Q provides the variety of data Contracts will need and has many useful functions. The computer-savvy contractors already using the product are thrilled with how easy it is to use. AIS hopes to be able to expand the use of the Q to other social service components within the program.

North Coastal/Inland Regions

Dental Task Force Launched in North County

Team to Tackle Rampant Problem

HSA's dental health initiative, *Share the Care* and the North Coastal and North Inland Regional staff are pleased to announce the newly formed North County Dental Task Force.

Thursday, March 18, representatives from the San Diego County Dental Society and the offices of Supervisor **Bill Horn**, (District 5) and Supervisor **Pam Slater-Price** (District 3) as well as dental professionals, community clinics, and other private and public health partners gathered for the first time to address dental health issues in north county.

The Task Force analyzed regional data and discussed dental health assets and gaps. They will meet regularly to plan activities to serve the community's oral health needs.

Dental caries is the most common chronic disease in children - five times more common than asthma. According to the 2000 US Surgeon General's Report, we are living with a "silent epidemic." Approximately \$60 million is spent annually through the Denti-Cal program in San Diego county alone. For every child without medical insurance, there are nearly three without dental insurance.

As part of the North County Business Plan, the Dental Task Force will work toward the goals set by the Healthy Communities & Lifestyles Committee. Through grant funding and public/private partnerships, future activities may include local dental sealant clinics and more community education.

For more information, please contact Susanne Boston at (760) 967-4567.

Some of the new North County Dental Task Force members.



The "Celebration of Faith Awards," held Friday evening, February 27, at the Star Theater in Oceanside honored community members in five categories (Business, Elected Official, Community Volunteer, Church and Public Service) who put their faith in action daily through their service and work.



L to R: North Coastal and North Inland Regions Deputy Director Nick Macchione, North County NAACP President & Faith-Based Community Development Corp Vice-President Rob Howard, City of Refuge Church of God in Christ/Oceanside Pastor Gerald Johnson & grandson Xavier, and County of San Diego Supervisor Bill Horn.

East Region

On a Positive Note

East County - a Strengths-Based Region

Unfortunately, most of us have little sense of our talents and strengths, much less the ability to build our lives around them. However, this is not the case for county employees who work in East Region. Ask any one of them the pressing question, "What are your strengths?" and they will confidently respond by naming their top five.

In the past two years, **Pam Smith's** East Region and Aging & Independence Services Leadership Teams have worked with research distilled by *The Gallup Organization* to build a strengths-based workforce. It started with providing a tool to discover everybody's individual strengths. Each employee was given the book, "*Now, Discover Your Strengths*," and access to the internet-based StrengthsFinder® profile. The program introduces 34 dominant strength "themes" with thousands of possible combinations, and reveals how they can best be translated into personal and career success. The web-based interview analyzes instinctive reactions and presents the five

most powerful signature themes, which can include:

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| • Achiever | • Activator | • Adaptability |
| • Analytical | • Arranger | • Belief |
| • Command | • Communication | • Competition |
| • Connectedness | • Context | • Deliberative |
| • Developer | • Discipline | • Empathy |
| • Fairness | • Focus | • Futuristic |
| • Harmony | • Ideation | • Inclusiveness |
| • Individualization | • Input | • Intellection |
| • Learner | • Maximizer | • Positivity |
| • Relator | • Responsibility | • Restorative |
| • Self-assurance | • Significance | • Strategic |
| • Woo | | |

Overall, the positive feedback from staff on this enlightening tool is that once everybody knows and exercises their strengths, it helps people build productive, stronger and happier relationships in and outside of the workplace. Many of them have proudly posted their strengths on their office door or cubicle and one employee said, "I've come to appreciate the people I work with more now that I only see their strengths."



Child Welfare Services

Mighty Mighty Mentors

Volunteers Make Personal Investments in our Future

April 18-24 is National Volunteer Week. It is a time to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state and national levels. National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 as an executive order signed by President Richard Nixon. This year's theme, "Volunteers Inspire by Example," reflects the power volunteers have to inspire not only the people they serve, but also inspire other people to volunteer.

The Child Welfare Services *Foster Youth Mentor Program* celebrates and recognizes the power and spirit that county volunteers give back as mentors. Of the 175 mentors in the program, 14 are County employees. Agency employee Gina Cordato says of her experience: "It gives me a chance to give back to the community, to be a posi-



tive, stable and consistent person in a child's life, which is something many foster youth don't have."

Mentors are trusted friends and guides. They provide the stability and encouragement that young people need to succeed. Research shows that adolescents who have an adult mentor are far less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors.

The Foster Youth Mentor Program matches trained mentors with foster children. If you are inspired to mentor a foster youth, please contact the Mentor Coordinator, Jannette Kutchins, at (858) 616-5930.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

[How can you help?](#)

[More information](#)

Mental Health

Untangling the Challenges of Double Trouble

Agency Trainings Address Co-occurring Disorders Initiative

For the past year, the Agency has implemented an initiative to address co-occurring disorders; that is, simultaneous issues with mental health and substance use. The initiative is a combined effort of Adult Mental Health, Children's Mental Health Services and Alcohol and Drug Services. Its purpose is to address system, programmatic and clinical/direct service needs of clients diagnosed with a serious mental illness and substance use problem.

Research documents that between 40 to 60 percent of clients with serious mental illness have a substance abuse problem.

To this end, the HHSA embarked on a community process to identify the needs, and the best practices available in the field and incorporate them in the delivery of care and services for clients in our system.

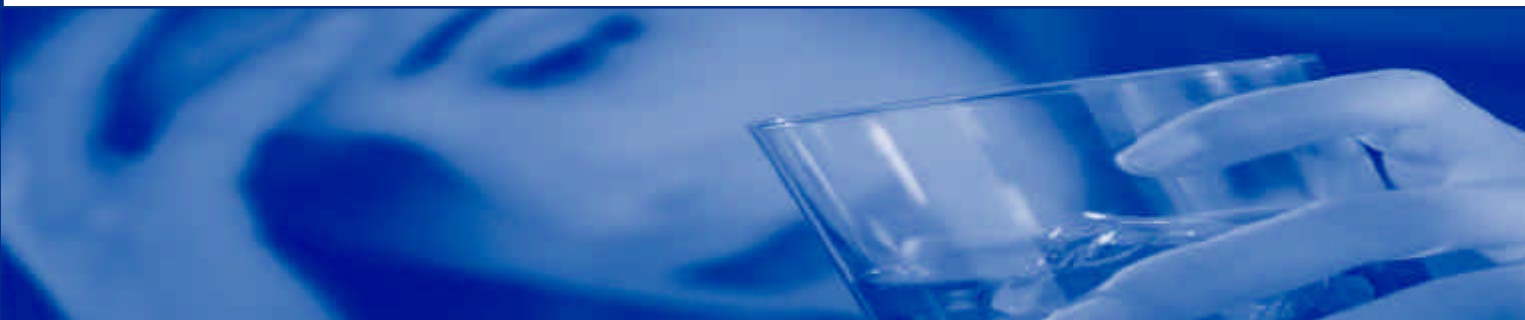
The co-occurring disorders initiative focuses on:

- 1) Developing a system of programmatic changes to deliver integrated mental health and substance-abuse care and services; and
- 2) providing a "train the trainer" program to develop a team educated on the Continuous Comprehensive Integrated Services model of service delivery, the system, which uses an integrated treatment and services approach for individuals who are dually diagnosed.

More than 20 mental health and alcohol and drug services programs and 30 County and contract staff are participating in the training, which is provided by renowned consultants in the field of co-occurring disorders.

During March, the trainers worked with mental health and alcohol and drug services staff to provide three regional trainings on the principles and the practices of the integrated model. Each two-hour workshop, entitled *"How do we Achieve Integrated Dual Diagnosis Services?"* outlined the philosophy and approach, provided an update on the implementation of this initiative, and explained how others can get involved.

For further information, please contact Piedad Garcia at 619-563-2700.



Support Divisions - Compliance Office

It's Your Right

Keep Your Medical Records Private

April 11-17 is National Health Information Privacy and Security Week. Sponsored by the *American Health Information Management Association* (AHIMA), this week is designed to raise awareness among the public about the importance of personal health information privacy and security.

For more information about your personal health information privacy rights, please contact the County Privacy Officer, Cynthia Paes, at (619) 515-4243, visit the [County of San Diego Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\) site](#) or the [AHIMA My Personal Health Record site](#).

Compliance Office

619-515-4244

Toll-Free Hotline: 866-549-0004

An ethical workplace is your right...and your responsibility...

South Region

Healthier Neighbors Community-Based Public Health Program

When **Paulina Bobenrieth**, RN, MPH, became manager of the South Region Public Health Center a year ago, she wanted to find a way to develop closer ties between Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and South Region communities.

PHNs make field visits to provide care to high-risk clients, such as young pregnant women, premature infants, drug-exposed children, and tuberculosis (TB) patients. Bobenrieth has assigned each PHN to serve specific areas of South Region. To determine how to best assign the nurses, she worked with GIS Analyst, **George Jones**, to create a map of the South Region that showed high school districts, ZIP codes, census tracts, school-based family resource centers, and the number of new client referrals in each zip code.

This approach to public health nursing is also being used in other regions,

and was in part inspired by the *Partnership for the Public's Health Initiative*, a project that aims to increase cooperation between government, community organizations, and residents to improve public health planning.

PHNs are gaining an in-depth understanding of the many resources and needs of the communities where they work, and the communities are also learning more about HHSA services. For example, after meeting a South Region PHN, *Promotoras* (lay health educators) at the Fairwinds Family Resource Center in Chula Vista requested information on TB. They were concerned about the high TB rate in their community and wanted to help educate the public about this potentially dangerous disease. The nurse arranged for *Tuberculosis Control* to give a bilingual in-service training to the *promotoras* in March.

By building stronger relationships between HHSA and the communities we serve, we will succeed in our efforts to achieve more with fewer resources during these lean budget times.



Remember...



[For more info](#)

[Conservation tips](#)



[Lighting tips](#)

[Room-by-room energy
conservation tips](#)

Submit your great ideas to help improve efficiency!

Do It Better By Suggestion

**Bet the
County Operator Knows!
858-694-3900**

Support Divisions - Information Technology Division (ITD)

Super Software Savings

Progress Made on Quality First Goal

One Quality First Goal we all share is to cut costs by minimizing the Pennant Alliance hours associated with software maintenance through applications services. Application Services are composed of two categories, which are identified separately in "Chargeback":

a) Development and Implementation

Those hours charged under a work order. These charges are excluded from the Quality First measure.

b) Maintenance and Support

All other application services charges (including service requests, break/fix, preventative maintenance and user support).

The baseline was established using all maintenance and support charges from "Chargeback" for FY2002-2003. Software applications that did not exist in the baseline year will not be counted in cur-

rent year total. This will ensure that we are comparing the same applications for the same period of time. ITD identified these new applications and excluded them

from the current year charges when comparing them with the baseline.

Since this goal is measured at the Agency level, ITD keeps track of the monthly progress. However, programs and regions can monitor their own maintenance and support charges monthly by checking Chargeback under Application Services, Maintenance and Support.

Based on Jan 2004 YTD projected figures, the Agency is at 14% cost reduction.

Good job! We must, however, remain vigilant as there is a tendency for costs to increase during the last quarter of the fiscal year.



HHSA Overview - Child Welfare Services - [hyperlinked!](#)

Each month, the *HHSA Connection* will feature the services of the Agency's different divisions, to provide a broad overview of the Agency. This month, the series continues with CWS.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) serves children and families across the county. The priorities for CWS are protecting children, preserving families, and building communities. By delivering family-centered and child-focused protective services, CWS strives to ensure that every child lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities. Services provided by CWS include:

Adoptions

The adoptions program provides services for children, birth parents and applicant families. Social

workers help birth parents who are considering adoption for their unborn child, assist families who seek to adopt, and make appropriate adoptive placements for foster children. (877) 423-6788

Foster Home Licensing

Recruits individuals and families who want to share their home and lives with foster children. Foster children of all ages are waiting for a nurturing, stable home until they can be reunited. (877) 792-5437

Foster Youth Mentor Program

Assists adults with becoming a mentor to foster youth. Matches are made based on identified

interests. Mentors enrich the lives of foster youth by providing a supportive and nurturing one-on-one relationship. (858) 616-5930

Independent Living Skills

This program helps prepare foster teens in out of home placements to emancipate successfully and live productive independent lives.

Child Abuse Hotline

Staffed 24 hours a day, trained social workers receive and respond to calls about child abuse and neglect. (800) 344-6000

**April is
Child Abuse
Awareness Month.**

2004 Budget Watch: State and County Timelines

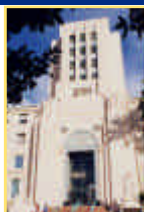
State of California



Governor submits proposed budget.

Legislature debates issues.
- Senate & Assembly begin subcommittee hearings

County of San Diego



This timeline provides an outline of the parallel state and county budget processes, as well as a general understanding of how the system works, in order to give context to on-going budget information.

We Are Here

Apr. 2 Groups submit CAO proposed budgets to Office of Financial Planning.
Apr. 15 Income taxes due. State can now base budget on real revenue numbers.

May 3 CAO proposed budget released to Board & public for review and:
- Testimony from Public
- Changes by Groups
- Concerns of Board
- Direction

May 11 Board accepts CAO proposed budget.

Governor releases May Revise.

Budget conference committee convenes

June 1 - 10th

June 8 - 18th Board conducts public hearings and deliberates on final budget.

Budget bill must be passed by midnight. (Historically, this deadline is not met.)

June 15

June 18 **Deadline for the CAO to file final budget.**

June 28 - 30 Board Deliberations & Approval of the '04 - '06 Operational Plan (Final County Budget).

New fiscal year begins. Budget plans for FY '05-'07 begin and continue through Dec., preparing for the Governor's Jan. 10 budget proposal.

July 1

Board must pass County Budget, whether or not the state budget is finalized.

Mid-year revisions could be required at any time, based on State Budget revisions.

*Administrative Professionals Day
April 21
Thanks for all you do!*



County of San Diego
Health and Human Services Agency

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Pam Slater-Price, District 3 Ron Roberts, District 4
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Health and Human Services Agency

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